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ABSTRACT

Conceptions of the male role are a highly salient facet of worldview worthy of consideration for counselors working with male populations. This paper introduces broad conceptual models of the male role including traditional masculinity, ideology, and gender role conflict and briefly summarizes research using these models, which illustrates the impact of masculinity on the social and emotional functioning of men. Culturally specific aspects of masculinity for Latino/Hispanic, African American, and Asian American men are offered, along with issues likely to be encountered when working with men of color. Counseling approaches and settings sensitive to these differing standards of masculinity are suggested. (Contains 84 references.) (Author)

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Running Head: MASCULINITY ACROSS CULTURE

Masculinity Ideology and Gender Role Conflict Across Cultures: Implications for Counseling African, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino Men

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Abstract

Conceptions of the male role are a highly salient facet of worldview worthy of consideration for counselors working with male populations. This paper introduces broad conceptual models of the male role including traditional masculinity ideology, and gender role conflict (O'Neil, 1981) and briefly summarizes research using these models, which illustrates the impact of masculinity on the social and emotional functioning of men. Culturally specific aspects of masculinity for Latino/Hispanic, African American, and Asian American men are offered, along with issues likely to be encountered when working with men of color. Counseling approaches and settings sensitive to these differing standards of masculinity are suggested.

An Introduction to Men's Studies

The men's movement was an outgrowth of the feminist movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Rather than attempting to undermine the efforts of women to redefine their social and historical roles in American society, the men's movement sought to support it and take it a step further. To do this meant beginning a careful examination of how the expectations and privilege bestowed upon men in American society impacted the men themselves and others. In the early stages of the men's movement, Pleck & Brannon (1978) noted that "social scientists have hardly studied the male role at all" (p. 1).

Since that time, much has been learned about how men view their roles as men, and how it mediates emotional functioning and interpersonal relationships. This expanding knowledge base continues to impact how counseling and therapy services are delivered to male clients. Literature exploring men from diverse cultures has also grown, which addresses the differing structures, experiences and unique issues of faced by men of color. This article therefore, has four objectives: (a) familiarize the reader with standards of the male role relevant to diverse populations, (b) review literature pertaining to the consequences of strict

adherence to those standards, (c) identify gender-specific issues likely to be encountered by male minority clients, and (d) to summarize select strategies and settings which are sensitive to the unique needs of African, Asian, and Latino/Hispanic American men.

Gender as Part of Worldview: Structure and Manifestations

In order to work effectively with any specialized population, it is essential to develop an understanding of that population's worldview. According to Nobel (1986) worldview is a general design for living and a pattern for interpreting reality. Authors have come to recognize that gender role expectations play a formative function in shaping the worldview of men as well as women (Casas, Turner, & Ruiz de Esparza, 2001) which highlights the continued need for gender awareness and sensitivity (see: Good, Gilbert & Scher, 1990) and the need to recognize socially defined gender roles as a critical variable "within the rubric of cultural diversity" (Brooks & Good, 2001, p. 13).

Rather than emphasizing the immutable biological aspects of gender roles, Kimmel and Messner (1989) suggest they are social constructions, which reflect the needs of a particular culture during a particular historical era. A construct that is consistent with this perspective and which

has been associated with research in the field of men's studies is masculinity ideology. Masculinity ideology is defined as the "endorsement and internalization of cultural belief systems about masculinity and male gender, rooted in the structural relationship between the two sexes" (Pleck, Sonenstien, & Ku, 1993a, p. 88). Implicit in this definition is the assumption that what it means to "be a man" varies greatly across cultures. In North America, the earliest and most widely cited models of masculinity ideology guiding much research, is Brannon's "Blueprint for Manhood" (1976). According to this model, expectations for the male role in North America has four themes: 1) "No sissy stuff" (the avoidance of all things feminine), 2) "The Big Wheel" (seeking status, power and admiration), 3) "The Sturdy Oak" (dependability, independence, an air of toughness and durability) and 4) "Give 'Em Hell" (violence, or the threat of violence if provoked). (For an additional perspective, see Levant, et al, 1992). A cross-cultural model stemming from the anthropological work of Gilmore (1990) indicated three elements for the male role: 1) protector, (guardian of family and country), 2) provider, (source of income and material goods) and 3) impregnator (virility, fertility and prowess with women). Though the author did not claim this to be a universal set of standards, these themes did appear to

be "ubiquitous." The degree of emphasis and behavioral manifestations of these themes varied widely across many of the cultures studied yet in societies where resources were scarce and men were conditioned to fight for them, these elements were found with surprising regularity. In societies that did not experience these conditions (Tahitians and the Semai) these elements were virtually absent.

A related perspective in the field has been gender role conflict (O'Neil, 1981). According to this approach, men experience stress because of the contradiction between the demands of the male role and naturally occurring desires (for a concise summary of gender role conflict and strain, see Levant, 1996a). A brief example of this contradiction may be the display of emotional pain or vulnerability. While a man may desire the release, to do so risks sanctions (internally or externally imposed) for violation of the masculine standards for stoicism, which begin very early in boyhood and are often shame-based and quite traumatizing (Pollack, 1998).

The emotional and behavioral consequences for extremes according to both models have negative consequences for both men themselves, and for those with whom men have personal relationships. Findings assessing masculinity ideology indicate relationships between higher levels of endorsement

and acceptance of rape supportive myths (Good, Hillenbrand-Gunn, & Wang, 1995) less condom use (Marsiglio, 1993; Pleck, Sonenstien & Ku, 1993b) less concern about unwanted pregnancy (Marsiglio, 1993), more frequent sexual encounters with less intimacy (Pleck, Sonenstien & Ku, 1993b), homophobia (Stark, 1991), psychological violence in courtship (Thompson, 1990), and self-reported aggression in preadolescent boys (Janey & Robertson, 2000). With regard to gender role conflict, findings point a wide range of negative outcomes including depression, emotional isolation, and various psychosomatic complaints and stress-related health issues (see: O'Neil, Good, & Holmes, 1995). It should be noted that the bulk of these studies were conducted using samples of predominately Euro-American males, clearly highlighting the need for more diversity in research efforts. Extrapolations to men from other groups should be made with caution.

Latino/Hispanic Men

According to 2000 census data, Latino/Hispanics are the largest and fastest growing minority group in North America. Since 1984, there has been more than a 53% increase in the number of individuals with Hispanic heritage living in the United State (Cuellar, Arnold & Gonzales, 1995). They presently account for almost 10% of the total population and

can be found in all fifty states, with the largest concentrations in California and Texas (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001). Because sub populations can originate from Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and several countries from South America, this is a very diverse group and generalizations should be made with caution.

Latino males are likely to view counseling as stigmatizing and humiliating (Johnson, 1988) and perhaps as a result underutilized counseling services (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). This makes appropriate outreach to potential Latino male clients a critical component of services. Any efforts at outreach should make an effort to counter sensationalist misconceptions about counseling and to frame services as a means for helping men to better provide for their families and meet personal goals (Casas, Turner, & Ruiz de Esparza, 2001). Casas, et al., (2001) suggest public radio announcements in Spanish as a viable strategy, aired during commutes to and from work in the afternoons and evenings. They also propose the use of mobile therapists who use vans to travel to work sites of agricultural workers and cooperating growers to provide on-site services, avoiding the threat of lost wages due to absence.

During initial contact with the Latino male, there may be an immediate need to explain the counselor's relationship to outside agencies to allay suspicions about representing government agencies responsible for enforcing immigration laws. The counselor should also be prepared to act in an advocate role, and to make referrals to organizations to deal with any potential or pending immigration proceedings should this issue arise. Atkinson, Thompson, & Grant (1993) suggest the counselor also needs to address other practical issues such as employment, housing, and medical care.

When confronting either practical issues such as these, or mental health concerns in which the counselor's role is more that of therapist, sensitivity surrounding Latino patriarchy and values associated with Machismo is essential. There is little consensus in the literature regarding the construct of Machismo. According to Trandis, et al, (1982) for some Hispanic men, machismo means a strong work ethic, being competitive, having high moral standards, faithfulness and passion. According to Sue & Sue, (2003) machismo is equated with strength, male-dominance and being a successful provider and protector of the family. This is contrasted by marianismo; expectations for the Latina woman's submissiveness, self-sacrifice, and nurturance. Findings of Abreu, Goodyear, Campos & Newcomb, (2000), indicate

adherence to machismo standards are a function of acculturation, with stronger adherence manifest in more traditional Latino men. Yet because gender roles may be more egalitarian in some segments of the Latino community (Gonzalez, 1997) it is necessary to assess the meaning and salience of machismo for each individual client.

When endorsement of traditional machismo of the high-identity, first generation immigrant Latino male is combined with the economic deprivation and unemployment often experienced by Latino families (Castex, 1998), a painful double-bind may develop. When viewed from a male role perspective, the man could experience powerful feelings of shame because of the discrepancy between the perceived duty and desire to meet family needs and his inability to do so, due to language and structural barriers and discriminatory employment practices.

This situation can be further complicated when the female is employed, and when family members are exposed to the more egalitarian gender roles in Euro-American culture. This may be interpreted as an additional challenge to the position of the male, provoking anxiety, isolation and mistrust on the part of the male client (Sue & Sue, 2003). Theory predicts a wide range of destructive behaviors and emotional responses impacting the individual and his family

(i.e., depression, substance abuse, emotional withdrawal, domestic violence, etc. See: Brooks & Silverstien, 1995).

It is important to recognize that a counseling intervention may threaten the male Latino role and authority even before it begins, since the client's presence indicates that all other support networks within his community have likely been exhausted (Sue & Sue, 2003; Urdaneta, Saldana, & Winkler, 1995), and he is risking his authority by seeking external help (Avila & Avila, 1995). It is important therefore, to minimize the threat to his position in the family to whatever extent is possible during initial sessions. Paniagua (1994) recommends honoring his role and his authority by speaking with him first before consulting with other family members if they are present. In the same context, Casas, et al., (2001) suggest treating the male as the expert consultant, respecting his detailed knowledge of assets and issues the family might be facing. During initial sessions, special care should be taken to avoid appearing to blame the male for whatever relationship difficulties are being experienced, whether it is in an individual or family context. In addition, Sue & Sue (2003) recommend viewing gender role issues as externally caused cultural conflicts, to be faced and resolved as a family unit using a problem-

solving approach in order to find balance between external influences and traditional Latino values.

Asia American Men

According to the 2000 census, more than 11.5 million Americans either identified themselves as being of Asian decent, or indicated Asian heritage as an additional ethnic group (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2001). There are more than forty Asian sub-populations from countries such as China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines and the southeastern Asian countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. There is rich abundance in terms of values, language and spiritual beliefs from each country of origin (Sandhu, 1997). Except for Japanese Americans, the majority of contemporary Asian Americans were born in their native countries (Population Reference Bureau, 1998).

Research meant to shed light on the nature and structure of the male role in Asian societies is sparse. In terms of family roles, evidence from other disciplines suggests that many Asian societies tend to be hierarchical and staunchly patriarchal. For example, in Southeastern Asia (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia) there is a strong preference for sons over daughters (Blair & Qian, 1998). In China, foot-binding of women continued to be practiced until the early 20th century (Levant, Wu & Fischer, 1996) and female

infanticide was practiced in rural villages as late as 1980 (McGowan, 1991). In Korea, male dominance is part of household language: the wife speaks to the husband as *uri chip ju in* (the master of our house). Also, Korean women were virtually excluded from domestic authority from 1948 to 1991 with patrilineage laws preventing surviving female family members from directly inheriting the estate of the father. Material resources were instead, passed on directly to the son (Moon, 1998).

In one of few studies conducted which specifically investigated masculinity in the Peoples Republic of China, Levant, et al., (1996) found that young Chinese men and women were significantly more traditional in their expectations for the male role than their American counterparts. In Korea, factor analysis using the Multicultural Masculinity Ideology Scale (Doss & Hopkins, 1998) revealed themes of achieving success and providing for family among undergraduate Korean men (Janey & Lee, 2002) suggestive of the provider theme of Gilmore (1990) and Euro-American themes of "Sturdy Oak" and "Big Wheel" (Brannon, 1976). The existence of similar themes in other Asian societies has yet to be verified, and it should be noted that there might be a subtle difference revealed when Asian values are considered.

For North American men, there is an element of self-aggrandizement in which educational and economic achievement is rewarded with increased status (Brannon, 1976). Though failure may provoke individual emotional consequences for the American male, the individualistic orientation of American culture insulates the family from undue disgrace. For many Asian men, however, this may not be the case, since the male gender role is defined in relation (Sue, 2001). It is worth considering that the Asian male client may experience unique pressure to achieve because honor of the family may be at stake. If an Asian male client is experiencing anxiety, it may bear a relationship to the male expectation for success. Certainly female Asian clients would not be immune to such responses, yet because of sons being given priority relative to daughters in educational matters (Min, 1998), it is plausible that the male Asian student may carry a comparatively larger burden for family honor.

An additional facet of the male role distinctive to east-Asian societies that follow neo-Confucian principles is the father's responsibility to successfully inculcate traditional values of filial piety in offspring (Sue, 2001). Filial piety (*Hyodo'* in Korean) is a pervasive and life-long loyalty and obedience to parents that is very much

intertwined with the masculinity of the father. Failure to properly instill filial piety is likely to bring family disgrace, and may be viewed as a direct threat to the father's manhood (Sue, 2001).

This can become a complex and sensitive issue with first generation men. Like Latino families, the spouse and children may begin to explore the more democratic relationships they are exposed to after arrival in the United States and may begin to resist paternal authority. Song-Kim (1992), hypothesized the male response to such cultural conflicts is to escalate and become more authoritarian, and in some situations, result in physical violence. Subsequent results seemed to support this hypothesis: three out of five Korean immigrant women were found to be victims of domestic violence in some form (Song-Kim, 1992).

In the context of a family encounter, strategies similar to those described for Latinos (i.e., addressing the father first, avoiding chastisement for functioning difficulties) may be advisable. This approach may lessen the risk of alienation, provided that appropriate adaptations are made for cultural values. Assessment of the family structure to identify specific culture conflicts may be accomplished in a dialogue with the father, investigating

how decisions are made and the roles that family members are expected to play on a day to day basis. Because of the shame associated with the display of emotion in Asian cultures, and the value placed on subtlety, Sue & Sue (2003) recommend avoiding a direct reflections of feeling (i.e., "I can see this upsets you") in favor of a more indirect approach ("Some might find this to be upsetting."). The latter offers a possible emotional response to the presenting situation rather than a direct identification of emotional affect.

Because of how the male gender role is defined in relation to family, it is unlikely that self-reflection and introspection strategies used with Western men (see: Leafgren, 1990) will be successful in resolving the cultural conflicts foreign-born and traditional Asian men are likely to encounter. This may be a useful for second or third generation men who are trying to distance themselves from traditional values in an effort to resolve a crisis about their ethnic identity. Particularly if the counselor is sensitive to the impact of the client's ethnic background and how their efforts to conform may represent an effort to gain the acceptance of non-Asians (Sue, 2001). It may also prove helpful for Asian men who have come full-circle in terms of their cultural identity, and have learned to appreciate elements of both mainstream society and Asian

traditions. Recent immigrants or those living in ethnic enclaves, however, would likely consider such self-exploration strategies self-indulgent and nonsensical (Atkinson, Kim, & Caldwell, 1998). What may prove more helpful for traditional Asian men is a cognitive-behavioral approach, since it does not conflict with male injunctions against the expression of emotion due to an emphasis on problem-solving and thoughts, rather than the exploration and expression of feelings (Mahalik, 2001).

This may be particularly desirable for Asian men because of parallels with Confucian principles, stressing conscious thinking processes and accurate perceptions of reality (Chung, 1992). Adaptations may be required, however, since the individualistic orientation of cognitive therapy may conflict with traditional Asian values. A modification suggested by Sue (2001) includes identifying cultural conflicts rather than irrational statements, and providing support for resolving them. A cited example may be the enactment of filial piety, which traditionally demands the physical presence of offspring. This may clash with the mobility often demanded by American employers, as well as the aspirations of more acculturated children. According to Sue (2001), the resulting absence would be interpreted as a failure of the father to properly instill traditional values

in offspring. By helping the Asian male client recognize this as a normative conflict in cultural expectations, the potential for internalizing a perceived failure of the male in his role could be reduced. This could in turn, facilitate a compromise and restructuring of his beliefs about filial piety that would promote greater harmony among family members.

African American Men

Among the most illuminating statistics noted in the field of men's studies is the difference in life span between men and women: On average, the lives of men are 7 years shorter (Courtenay, 2000). When race is added to the equation, research indicates that a Black male will die five to seven years earlier than a white male of the same age, and twelve to nineteen years earlier than a white female. Contributing factors include less access to healthcare (Anderson, 1995) decreased likelihood of undergoing major therapeutic surgeries compared to whites (Harris, Andrews, & Elixhauser, 1997) and significantly higher levels of diabetes (National Center for Health Statistics, 1996), AIDS infection (Talvi, 1997), and hypertension (National Center for Health Statistics, 1996), which according to Krieger and Sidney (1996), is related to stress due to discrimination.

African American men are also over-represented in the criminal justice system: One third of young adult Black men are on probation, parole, or in jail (Freeberg, 1995). Mercy (1993) indicates the principal cause of death for African Americans between the ages of 15 to 34 is homicide, which is a rate more than ten times greater than that of Whites. Such bleak contemporary statistics have caused sustained concern, prompting authors to refer to African American men as "an endangered species" (Gibbs, 1988). Very often at the center of the discourse on the state of African American men, are conceptions of masculinity.

This issue presents parallels as well as unique distinctions compared to the previously mentioned populations of men. All three ethnic groups have their efforts to actualize and/or provide and protect their families undermined by racism and oppression, epitomizing the sex role strain described previously (O'Neil, 1981). In African American culture, not only is the male role undermined by oppression, it is also in large measure defined by oppression (Franklin, 1995). For example, the radical Black Power masculinity of the 1960s was in part, a response to the denial of manhood and was viewed as a decisive force for social justice (Grier & Cobbs, 1968; Segal, 1990; Turner, 1977). The complicated and precarious

balance contemporary men must find between honoring Afrocentric values while simultaneously trying to live up to the mainstream values of success, competitiveness, and aggression, (see: Cazenave, 1984; Staples, 1982) reflect the efforts of Black men to fulfill their roles as providers for family in the face of economic deprivation. Finally, the hypermasculine "cool pose" masculinity (Majors & Billson, 1992) of poor inner city youth is believed to have emerged to offset "feelings of powerlessness, shame and guilt that result from the inability to enact traditional masculine roles" (Franklin, 1995, p. 283).

Additional features of the latter require elaboration. Defining features of what Oliver (1989) describes as a "tough guy" and "player of women" conception of masculinity emphasizes sexual promiscuity, thrill seeking and the use of violence in interpersonal interactions. Roughly consistent with Brannon's (1976) model is also an avoidance of all things feminine. One of the things which is equated with femininity, or occasionally "acting white" (see: Fordham, & Ogbu, 1986) is academic prowess. In an effort to avoid sanctions from peers, African American boys may hide books, lie about grades, or generally reject intellectual pursuits (Franklin, 1995). This may explain the findings of Osbourne (1997) which indicate that the self-esteem of a sample of

African American boys was no longer dependent on academic performance. These results may also shed light on the achievement disparity between African American men and their female counterparts. According to Brotherton (2001), only a third of graduates from historically Black universities are men.

If the problem for African American boys is a maladaptive and distorted view of the male role, then it is logical that a strategy that includes a component regarding a relearning or reorientation to masculinity would be a useful and liberating strategy. This is precisely one of the many goals of rites of passage programs such as Manhood Training, and Mothers to Sons (Caldwell & White, 2001; Queener & Martin 2001). Program content typically incorporates African spiritual values, history, and Afrocentric principles for living. They are offered through such diverse settings as community civic groups, churches or on university campuses. A crucial component is the opportunity to engage in a two-way dialogue with an older mentor to help youth navigate a wide variety of developmental challenges, one of which is the development of a more functional and empowering conceptualization of what it means to be a man. In addition to the obvious advantage of not requiring a potentially threatening appearance at a

mental health center, there is also a much greater cultural relevance and sensitivity compared to traditional approaches. Rite of passage programs also capitalize on the male inclination toward group work (Andronico, 1996) and male preferences favoring workshops and educational opportunities compared to a traditional counseling setting (Robertson & Fitzgerald, 1992). Counselors interested in referring clients to such programs should bear in mind that participation may be a positive, yet powerful encounter experience for clients at the preexposure level of their culture identity (Cross, 1995) and should plan an opportunity to process the experience.

Considering the great potential for helping a large number of participants, it would be highly commendable and worthwhile to organize a rite of passage program. As valuable and beneficial as such programs might be, however, they require the investment and the commitment of many resources from the larger community. In the interest of meeting individual needs of African American men in the interim, counselors may wish to expand their theoretical repertoire to include more Afrocentric approaches. One highly cited possibility worthy of study is NTU therapy (pronounced "in-too" meaning "unifying force") (see: Phillips, 1990). It seeks to help African American men exist

more harmoniously with themselves and in their relationships, and live according to the principles of the Nguzo Saba and Kwanzaa.

Men of Color and Negative Portrayals

Although each group has culturally specific issues of which the counselor must be mindful, there is an additional factor in American society that should be considered when counseling men from culturally diverse backgrounds. Men of color are seldom viewed or portrayed as worthy of respect, trust and admiration in the media and society at large. For example, Asian men are rarely seen as possessing ideal male traits. According to Cheng, (1996) Asian men were described by participants as shy, quiet, passive, and "not tough enough." Images from the media are also not helpful. If Asian men are not being depicted as martial arts experts (i.e., Jackie Chan, Bruce Lee) or villains, they play one-dimensional characters acting as laundry workers, waiters, and cooks (Sue, 2001). African American and Latino/Hispanics hardly fare any better. Although they describe their role as males in favorable and unselfish ways from their own perspective (see Davis & Hunter, 1994; Trandis, et al, 1982), they are nonetheless rendered in stereotypical ways as violent criminals, absent fathers, and academic under-achievers (Caldwell & White, 2001).

These toxic distortions may become internalized as models for masculinity, both for the men themselves, and for others that are exposed to these images, including counselors (White & Cones, 1999). Because such internalized stereotypes can negatively impact effectiveness, Caldwell & White (2001) admonish counselors to begin the developmental task of conducting a careful "self-interrogation" which focuses on personal biases and negative images that may have been internalized over time. Once these images and accompanying attitudes are revealed and confronted with the help of an interested colleague, the counselor is in a stronger position to help the client through a similar process, and to help them make connections with more positive models of masculinity. The importance of such a process cannot be understated and in the case of African American men, Caldwell & White (2001) argue that such an examination and reformulation would "allow for the fullest expression of Black functioning and identity, regardless of social conditioning" (p.745). Men from other minority populations seeking to relearn and redefine manhood would undoubtedly experience similar benefits, as would their families.

Conclusion

There are several additional points that need to be made concerning counseling men of color. First, it should be noted that the issues and strategies reviewed are not exhaustive, and are offered only as introduction to the field. There were many populations and viable strategies that could not be covered due to practical limitations. The interested reader is encouraged to learn more about issues faced by men from Native American tribes, gay and bisexual men, men of multiracial descent, men at high risk of HIV infection, in addition to sub-populations of men already mentioned. This must include other sources of variability as well, such as age, geographic region, economic background, and a complex mosaic of other culturally specific elements covered extensively elsewhere (see: Sue & Sue, 2003). Each group will have a distinct conception of the male role that will have a substantial impact on professional practice. Though some of the strategies mentioned may be adapted to populations other than those indicated (for example, a rite of passage program for Latino male youth), this should be done with caution and in a way that is sensitive to distinctive cultural values and unique pressures that shape the emotional and behavioral responses of men from each group.

Second, all of the interventions for all three populations have focused on interactions with individual men and their families, in order to help them negotiate cultural conflicts and meet the challenges of contemporary American society. Working with clients individually has been and continues to be the primary focus of counseling, but it would be a mistake to conclude that helping individual clients cope rationally with an irrational society is enough. It is our responsibility to intervene on a larger stage, with the identified 'client' being organizations, and the maladaptive behavior viewed as the racist structural barriers men of color and their families face every day. To continue to intervene only on a small group or individual basis implies a tacit "blame-the-victim" orientation (Lewis, et al, 1998). Clearly, our best hope for maximizing our effectiveness and preventing problems before they develop lies in activism: as change agents outside of a traditional sphere.

Finally, competence with culturally different clients requires a wide range of culturally relevant skills, a continued commitment to expanding our knowledge base about the needs of different racial and ethnic groups, and an awareness of how personal biases may affect the therapeutic process (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Part of our

awareness must include the impact of gender and how we personally construct our meaning of manhood. The flawed and destructive side of male dominance is too well documented for defense or denial. Perhaps it is necessary to place that in historical perspective. We can expect and respect a man's desire for change, and balance the negatives with the hopeful possibility that "being a man" can also mean a willingness of our fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers to make personal sacrifices for those they care about most (Levant, 1996b).

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